

Week Ending Friday, April 15, 2005

The President's Radio Address

April 9, 2005

Good morning. This week I have been in Rome to attend the funeral mass of Pope John Paul II. The ceremonies were a powerful and moving reminder of the profound impact this Pope had on our world. And on behalf of America, Laura and I were honored to pay tribute to this good and holy man.

During nearly three decades on the Chair of Saint Peter, this Pope brought the gospel's message of hope and love and freedom to the far corners of the Earth. And over this past week, millions of people across the world returned the Pope's gift with a tremendous outpouring of affection that transcended differences of nationality, language, and religion.

The call to freedom that defined his papacy was forged in the experiences of Pope John Paul's own life. He came to manhood during the Nazi occupation of his beloved Poland, when he eluded the Gestapo to attend an underground seminary. Later, when he was named Poland's youngest bishop, he came face to face with the other great totalitarianism of the 20th century, communism. And soon he taught the communist rulers in Warsaw and Moscow that moral truth had legions of its own and a force greater than their armies and secret police.

That moral conviction gave the man from Krakow a confidence that inspired millions. In 1978, when he looked out at the crowd in front of Saint Peter's as their new Pope, the square rang with his words "Be Not Afraid."

Everywhere he went, the Pope preached that the call of freedom is for every member of the human family because the Author of Life wrote it into our common human nature.

Many in the West underestimated the Pope's influence, but those behind the Iron Curtain knew better, and ultimately even the

Berlin Wall could not withstand the gale force of this Polish Pope.

The Pope held a special affection for America. During his many visits to our country, he spoke of our "providential Constitution," the self-evident truths about human dignity enshrined in our Declaration, and the blessings of liberty that followed from them. It is these timeless truths about man, enshrined in our founding, the Pope said, that have led freedom-loving people around the world to look to America with hope and respect. And he challenged America always to live up to its lofty calling. The Pope taught us that the foundation for human freedom is a universal respect for human dignity. On all his travels, John Paul preached that even the least among us bears the image of our Creator, so we must work for a society where the most vulnerable among us have the greatest claim on our protection.

And by his own courageous example in the face of illness and suffering, he showed us the path to a culture of life where the dignity of every human person is respected and human life at all its stages is revered and treasured.

As the Pope grew physically weaker, his spiritual bond with young people grew stronger. They flocked to him in his final moments, gathering outside his window to pray and sing hymns and light candles. With them, we honor this son of Poland who became the Bishop of Rome and a hero for the ages.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:45 a.m. on April 8 at the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Rome, Italy, for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on April 9. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 8 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

**The President's News Conference
With Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of
Israel in Crawford, Texas**

April 11, 2005

President Bush. Mr. Prime Minister, welcome to my home. Appreciate you coming. I appreciate our meeting. I'm looking forward to serving you some good food for lunch. Most importantly, I'm looking forward to driving you around the ranch; I want you to see my place. I know you love the land. The Prime Minister was telling me he's really a farmer at heart, and I look forward to sharing with my friend what life is like here in central Texas. So, welcome. He invited me to his place one day, in Israel, and it's something that I look forward to doing as well.

The United States and the State of Israel have a deep and lasting friendship based on our shared values and aspirations for a peaceful world. The United States is committed to Israel's security and well-being as a Jewish state, including secure and defensible borders. We're committed to preserving and strengthening Israel's capability to deter its enemies and to defend itself.

Today we discussed ways to expand cooperation of our economies. The Prime Minister believes that developing Negev and the Galilee regions is vital to ensuring a vibrant economic future for Israel. I support that goal, and we will work together to make his plans a reality.

Prime Minister Sharon is showing strong, visionary leadership by taking difficult steps to improve the lives of people across the Middle East, and I want to thank you for your leadership. I strongly support his courageous initiative to disengage from Gaza and part of the West Bank. The Prime Minister is willing to coordinate the implementation of the disengagement plan with the Palestinians. I urge the Palestinian leadership to accept his offer. By working together, Israelis and Palestinians can lay the groundwork for a peaceful transition.

The Prime Minister and I discussed the important and encouraging changes taking place in the region, including a Palestinian election. We discussed the need for Israel to work with the Palestinian leadership to improve the daily lives of Palestinians, espe-

cially their humanitarian situation, so that Israelis and Palestinians can realize a peaceful future together.

I reiterated that the United States supports the establishment of a Palestinian state that is viable, contiguous, sovereign, and independent. The United States will continue working with the international community to help Palestinians develop democratic political institutions, build security institutions dedicated to maintaining law and order and dismantling terrorist organizations, reconstruct civic institutions, and promote a free and prosperous economy.

I remain strongly committed to the vision of two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The Prime Minister and I reaffirmed our commitment to that vision and to the roadmap as the only way forward to realize it. The roadmap has been accepted and endorsed by both Israel and the Palestinian Authority, along with virtually the entire international community. The Prime Minister and I share a desire to see the disengagement from Gaza and part of the West Bank serve to reenergize progress along the roadmap.

The United States is working with Palestinians and Israelis to improve security on the ground. We are cooperating with the Palestinians to help them fulfill all their obligations under the roadmap, especially sustained, effective operations to stop terrorism and dismantle terrorist capabilities and infrastructure. Building true security for Israelis and Palestinians demands an immediate, strong, and sustained effort to combat terrorism in all its forms.

I've told the Prime Minister of my concern that Israel not undertake any activity that contravenes roadmap obligations or prejudice final status negotiations. Therefore, Israel should remove unauthorized outposts and meet its roadmap obligations regarding settlements in the West Bank.

As part of a final peace settlement, Israel must have secure and recognized borders. These should emerge from negotiations between the parties in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338. As I said last April, new realities on the ground make it unrealistic to expect that the outcome of final status negotiations